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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS PRESS CONFERENCE HELD

ALBANY: Maxwell Wood, United States Attorney for the Middle District of Georgia; Ken Hodges, District Attorney, Dougherty Judicial Circuit; and Joe Mulholland, District Attorney, South Georgia Judicial Circuit held a press conference on Tuesday, February 22, 2005, to announce the expansion of the district's **Project Safe Neighborhoods** initiative to include Baker, Calhoun, Decatur, Dougherty, Grady and Mitchell counties.

In making the announcement, Wood said, "We focused our initial efforts in the Macon, Houston County area because it is both a population center and a crime statistics center. We will now be expanding the membership in our task force to include the law enforcement professionals in these six counties in Southwest Georgia. and focusing our efforts on offenders with illegal guns who commit crimes there ". The Sheriffs from several of the new counties were in attendance and spoke with the media about what this will mean to their respective counties.

Project Safe Neighborhoods is a federal initiative announced in May, 2001, by President George W. Bush and then Attorney General John Ashcroft to reduce gun violence in America. The initiative includes partnerships among federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies; strategic planning incorporating such technologies as crime mapping, gun tracing, and ballistic analysis; training that brings together federal, state, and local officials to build effective teams; outreach to communities; and

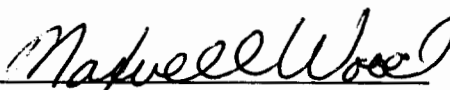
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accountability for impact on community safety.

The nation's 93 U.S. Attorneys, including Mr. Wood, have taken the lead in bringing **Project Safe Neighborhoods** to the states and communities they serve. In partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, they are spearheading the enforcement task forces, working with local officials and state prosecutors to identify the most effective laws to use against gun-carrying criminals, and helping to focus community attention and energy on reducing gun violence.

To learn more about **Project Safe Neighborhoods**, contact the U.S. Attorney's Office at 478-752-3511 or visit www.psn.gov.

APPROVED FOR RELEASE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maxwell Wood", is written over a horizontal line.

MAXWELL WOOD
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY